

**CLAIMS**

1. A method of routing for a message via an IMS system comprising the steps of:

- 5 receiving a message at an I-CSCF;  
obtaining address information for a network function for which said message is intended; and  
sending said message to said network function in accordance with said address information.

10

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said message is sent directly to the network function via a proxy or gateway element.

15

3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said obtaining step comprises querying a database.

4. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein said database comprises a SLF.

20 5. A method as claimed in claim 3 or 4, wherein said database provides said address information for said network function.

6. A method as claimed in claim 3, 4 or 5, wherein said database provides information identifying a further database.

25

7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein said further database comprises one of a HSS, UMS or SSR.

30 8. A method as claimed in claim 6 or 7, wherein said further database contains said address information.

9. A method as claimed in claim 6, 7 or 8, wherein said further database contains configuration information of said network function.

35

10. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, comprising the step of determining if said message is for an IMS target or a non-IMS target.
5. 11. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein said steps of claim 1 are followed if it is determined that said message is for a non-IMS target.
10. 12. A method of routing a message from a network function via an IMS system comprising the steps of:
  - originating a message from a network function;
  - determining the address of a proxy entity to which said message is to be sent;
  - routing said message to said proxy entity; and
15. 13. A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said entry point is in the same network as said AS.
20. 14. A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said entry point is in a different network to said AS.
25. 15. A method as claimed in claim 12, 13 or 14, wherein said originating step comprises originating one of a session and a transaction.
30. 16. A method as claimed in any of claims 12 to 15, wherein said determining step comprises the step of querying one of a database, table, file and a list.
17. A method as claimed in any of claims 12 to 16, wherein said determining step comprises determining the proxy entity from information contained in said function.

18. A method as claimed in any of claims 12 to 17, comprising the step of determining the entry point to which said message is to be routed.

5 19. A method as claimed in any of claims 12 to 18, wherein said proxy entity is arranged to determine the target entry point to which said message is to be sent.

10 20. A method as claimed in claim 19, wherein said proxy entity is arranged to determine the target entry point to which said message is to be sent by accessing a database.

21. A method as claimed in claim 20, wherein said database comprises a DNS.

15 22. A method of routing a message from a network function via an IMS system comprising the steps of:

originating a message from a network function;

determining the I-CSCF to which said message is to be sent;

20 routing said message directly to said I-CSCF if said I-CSCF is in a same network as said network function.

25 23. A method of routing a message from a network function via an IMS system comprising the steps of:

originating a message from a network function;

determining the I-CSCF to which said message is to be sent;

routing said message directly to said I-CSCF if said I-CSCF is in a trusted network.

30 24. A method of routing a message from a network function via an IMS system, said method comprising the steps of:

sending a request from the network function to an I-CSCF;

determining at the I-CSCF the S-CSCF to which a message from said network function is to be sent; and

35 sending said message to the determined S-CSCF.

25. A method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said network function comprises a PLS.
26. A method as claimed in claim 24 or 25, wherein said determining step comprises querying a database.
27. A method as claimed in claim 24, 25 or 26, wherein said determining step comprises querying a HSS.
- 10 28. A method of routing a message from a first network function via an IMS system, said method comprising the steps of:  
    sending a request from the first network function to an I-CSCF;  
    determining at the I-CSCF a second network function to which a message from said first network function is to be sent; and  
15     sending said message directly from the I-CSCF to said second network function.
- 20 29. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said network function comprises a network entity.
30. A method as claimed in claim, wherein said network function comprises one of application server, server and gateway.
- 25 31. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said network function provides an adaptation functionality.
- 30 32. A method of routing a message comprising the steps of:  
    receiving a message in accordance with a first protocol;  
    converting said message to a second protocol;  
    querying a database using identification information in said message to obtain new identification information; and  
    using said new identification information to route the message to a proxy.
- 35 33. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said proxy is arranged to route said message.

34. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said proxy is arranged to obtain a translation of said identity.
35. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said proxy routes the 5 message to another network.
36. A method as claimed in claim 35, wherein the proxy routes the message to an I-CSCF.
- 10 37. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein an I-CSCF is arranged to query said database.
38. A method as claimed in claim 37, wherein said I-CSCF is arranged to route said message to said proxy.
- 15 39. A method as claimed in claim 38, wherein an entity receiving said message is arranged to route said message to said proxy.
40. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said second protocol 20 is SIP.
41. A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said proxy is arranged to route said message to a gateway.
- 25 42. A method of routing for a message via an IMS system comprising the steps of:  
sending a message to an I-CSCF from a network function based on address information obtained by said network function;  
obtaining address information at said I-CSCF for said message;
- 30 and  
sending said message from said I-CSCF in accordance with said address information.
43. A method as claimed in claim 1 or any claim appended thereto, 35 wherein said network function comprises a server, said server being arranged to send a message for at least one user via a S-CSCF and to send a message for at least one user via an I-CSCF.

44. A server arrangement for providing a service via a network to at least one entity, said server comprising:

5 a server for offering services to at least one subscriber via said network; and

a database storing information about said at least one subscriber.

45. A server arrangement as claimed in claim 44, wherein said 10 database is part of said server.

46. An arrangement as claimed in claim 44, wherein said database is separate from said server.

15 47. A server arrangement as claimed in claim 44, 45 or 46, wherein in use, said server is operated independently of said network

48. A server arrangement as claimed in any of claims 44 to 48, wherein said network is operated by a network provider and said 20 server is operated by a service provider, said network provider and said service provider being different.

49. A server arrangement as claimed in claim 44, wherein said server and said database are operated by a common service provider.

25

50. A server arrangement as claimed in any of claims 44 to 49, wherein said network is used for routing between said server and at least one subscriber.

30 51. A method of providing a service to a subscriber from a server via a network, said method comprising the steps of:

Providing service information for a subscriber, said service information being provided by a server arrangement, said server arrangement comprising a server and at least one database containing 35 subscriber information; and

Routing said service information via a network.

52. A method as claimed in claim 51, wherein at least one database is part of said server.

53. A method as claimed in claim 51 or 52, wherein said server arrangement is operated by a service provider, different to an operator providing said network.

54. A method as claimed in claim 51, 52 or 53, wherein said network is an IMS network.

10

55. A method as claimed in any of claims 51 to 54, wherein said at least one subscriber is an IMS subscriber.

15

58. A call session control function, said call session control function having a first mode in which said call session control function provides a call session control function and a second mode in which said call session control function provides an outbound proxy function.

20

59. A call session control function as claimed in claim 58, wherein said call session control function comprises one of a serving call session control function, an interrogating call session control function and a proxy call session control function.

25

60. A call session control function as claimed in claim 58 or 59, wherein said modes are selected in response to a signal received by said call session control function.

30

61. A call session control function as claimed in claim 60, wherein the mode is controlled in response to information contained in an address of said call session control function.

35

62. A call session control function as claimed in claim 60 or 61 wherein the mode is controlled in response to information provided separately from the address of said call session control function.

63. A call session control function as claimed in claim 61, wherein said information is provided in at least one of a separate header and payload.